

women of our armed forces, BG Sanders and his family have repeatedly sacrificed time together for extended periods to answer the call to serve his country.

Commissioned in May 1980 through the Army Reserve Officers Training Corps at Sam Houston State University, BG Sanders began his military career with Texas Army National Guard. His subsequent duties included various tactical, operational and strategic assignments, including commands of a combat engineer company, battalion and brigade. He was deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Stabilization Force (SFOR) 7 and on active duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III in 2004. Most recently, he was deployed to Iraq with his division headquarters where he assumed responsibilities to establish the U.S. Consulate in Basrah; assess, plan and build-out oil and gas infrastructure; and establish logistical conditions for the withdrawal of U.S. Forces from Iraq. BG Sanders has served honorably through each of his assignments and deployments and has received the Bronze Star and Meritorious Service Medal among additional commendation and service medals.

It is due to the selfless actions and sacrifices of the men and women like BG Sanders that we enjoy the quality of life and freedoms that are the envy of nations around the world. I am honored for the privilege to represent Brigadier General Stephen G. Sanders in the United States Congress. I, along with his family, friends, citizens and his safe return.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SPANISH
AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR A
BETTER COMMUNITY'S 45TH AN-
NIVERSARY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Spanish American Committee for a Better Community, an organization that has been addressing the most pressing issues of the Hispanic/Latino community living in Cleveland since 1966. It is celebrating its 45th anniversary on November 18, 2011.

The Spanish American Committee for a Better Community is the oldest and largest Hispanic human services organization in Ohio and serves more than 5,500 people annually. Its vision is to continuously enhance programs and services designed to foster self-sufficiency, career readiness, and wealth creation for individuals, children, and families, with a goal of creating socioeconomic stability in the community and in the entire Northeast Ohio region. It offers programming in several areas including family support, early childhood enrichment, educational training, home ownership counseling and employment training.

The success achieved by the Spanish American Committee is acknowledged by outside organizations. The United Way recognizes the Spanish American Committee as a partnering agency. The Spanish American Committee is a national affiliate member of the National Council of La Raza. Additionally, the United States of America's Department of Housing and Urban Development has certified the Spanish American Committee as a housing council site.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the Spanish American Committee for a Better Community as they celebrate 45 years of community assistance.

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL
COMMISSION ON EMPLOYMENT
AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT
OF 2011

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the National Commission on Employment and Economic Security Act of 2011.

This legislation is a necessary and vital investment for our nation's workforce and their families. It will establish a national commission to examine issues of economic and psychological insecurity within our workforce that have been caused by employment displacement. Further, it will propose solutions, including recommendations for legislative and administrative action, to Congress and the President.

Since the recession began in December 2007, more than 5.1 million jobs have been lost. In October 2011, the unemployment rate remains firm at 9 percent, and it is much higher in many states like Florida, at 10.6 percent, and it has topped 11 percent in Michigan, California, South Carolina, and the District of Columbia.

Over the past year, unemployment rates have increased in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The scope of the economic downturn is so large that its impact is felt virtually everywhere along the economic spectrum.

While Americans lose their jobs and their incomes shrink, too often, they face the loss of their family's health insurance and, subsequent to the loss of income, even their housing. According to an American Psychological Association September 2010 report, money (76 percent), work (70 percent) and the economy (65 percent) remain the most frequently cited sources of stress for Americans. Perhaps even more disturbing, calls to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline have increased by more than 72 percent from 2007 to 2010.

Mr. Speaker, the mental health of the American worker will be integral on the road to economic recovery. Congress must face this problem head on and help the very people who are facing unemployment, loss of health insurance, home foreclosure, stress, increased violence, and depression. It is time that we create this Commission and get our nation back on track.

I believe that we have a responsibility to ensure the greatest possible assistance to our nation's workforce, whose commitment to economic participation has been a defining feature of the cultural fabric of our country. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL ADOPT-
TION DAY/MONTH NOVEMBER 18,
2011

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize November 19, 2011 as National Adoption Day, which celebrates adoptive families who have opened their homes to children placed in foster care. Today, states, communities, public and private organizations, businesses, families, and individuals come together to increase awareness of children in need of permanent homes and families.

Mr. Speaker, currently there are over 463,000 children living in foster care. These children have been placed in homes on the account of the physical, sexual and emotional abuse they have endured with their biological caretaker. My state of California currently has the largest foster care population with the number of youths in foster care tripling since 1981. These children deserve to grow up in a loving home that is safe, happy, and most importantly one they can call their own.

Since the first major effort to bring awareness to the need of adoptive families, which was initiated by former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis and later proclaimed a month in November 1995 by President William J. Clinton, nearly 50,000 children in the system have been adopted yearly. American families have opened their homes to these children and provided resources and opportunities that allowed them to have a chance of claiming the American Dream.

Unfortunately out of the 463,000 children living in foster care, about 107,000 are available for adoption. 65% of children who are not placed in a permanent home emancipate themselves from the system often left unemployed, without a place to live and resorting to homeless shelters. Less than 3 percent go on to college and emancipated females end up four times more likely to receive public assistance compared to the overall population of the United States.

Measures by the government have been implemented to increase the adoption rate and make the process of adoption easier for families who seek to adopt. The Affordable Care Act increases and improves the Adoption Tax Credit. It allows the process of adoption to be accessible and affordable for families who want to nurture, care, uplift and open their home to a child. States can also receive incentives for increasing adoptions of children adopted from foster care. A project by the Department of Health and Human Services, AdoptUsKids, offers support to States and even tribes and territories to recruit adoptive parents. The project also provides assistance and help to families considering adoption or those who have begun the process.

Mr. Speaker, it is vital that we continue to create more programs, events and activities that will enlighten citizens of the United States on stories of children successfully placed in permanent homes, debunk myths about the process and acknowledge the thousands of children who could potentially become a part of these statistics. Through these efforts we can increase the rate of adoption, decrease the rate of homelessness among the youths in

this group and help develop future leaders and innovative thinkers of tomorrow.

To the families who have opened their hearts and homes to these children we celebrate you and your efforts to change the lives of these children. As the rest of us enjoy and share the company of our children and extended family members, let us not forget those children who will not have the same opportunity to do the same. Let us not forget the children who will not be able to celebrate the holiday season in a warm, loving, and happy home they can call their own. Let us remember these children and work towards positively affecting these children's lives and securing their success in the future.

THE NEED TO PROTECT PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. ROSS of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer, Congress passed a bipartisan, compromise agreement—known as the Budget Control Act of 2011—to raise the debt ceiling in two stages by 2013. The new law cuts spending by more than it increases the debt limit and it does not raise any taxes.

Specifically, the Budget Control Act will reduce the deficit by more than \$2 trillion over the next 10 years. To do so, it directly specifies \$917 billion in deficit cuts now and requires at least an additional \$1.2 trillion in savings by December 23, 2011. Tasked with finding these deficit cuts is the 12-member, bipartisan and bicameral Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction, also known as the “Super Committee.”

According to the new law, the Super Committee must recommend a plan to Congress by November 23, 2011, that cuts the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion in ten years. Then, Congress has until December 23, 2011, to pass the plan on a straight up-or-down vote, meaning no amendments and no filibusters allowed. If Congress fails to pass the plan or comes up short, then across-the-board spending cuts would automatically take effect, split evenly among defense and non-defense spending.

As we are approaching the November 23 deadline, I continue to believe that we need to make serious changes to our budget that will provide necessary savings to help stabilize our long-term financial security. However, any changes that take place over the long run must not be at the expense of our seniors. We absolutely cannot reduce the deficit by cutting seniors' benefits or jeopardizing the stability of programs that they rely on. This is not what I want and this is not what the American people want.

Over 20 million Americans aged 60 and older are economically insecure—living at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). The FPL does not account for the rising cost of living seniors experience as they age, which can include illness, loss of a spouse, or care for a disabled spouse, adult dependent child, or grandchildren.

Many seniors rely on fixed incomes, receiving on average \$1,081 in Social Security benefits, \$401.70 in Supplemental Security Income, and/or \$297 in public assistance each

month. Women fare worse than men, with 56% economically disadvantaged compared to 30% of men. Weekly earnings vary by age and gender. Men aged 55 and older have the highest average weekly earnings at \$965, while women earn \$744.

In August 2011, 1.7 million Americans aged 55 and older were actively seeking work. The unemployment rate for mature workers in this age group is 6.6 percent. The average duration of looking for employment is 44.6 weeks.

These are only a few statistics highlighting the economic difficulties many of our nation's elders face.

I believe that reducing the federal budget deficit is important to our nation's economic future and will require difficult choices and shared sacrifice. However, spending cuts cannot be made at the expense of economically disadvantaged seniors. Due to the recent economic downturn, more seniors than ever need assistance and support to make ends meet.

The Super Committee and Congress must be mindful of this as any possible changes are made to senior related programs and benefits.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT FROM NOVEMBER 18TH

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, today the House, as required by the Budget Control Act, voted on a Balanced Budget Amendment (BBA) to the Constitution. It is disheartening that we could not get the required two-thirds votes needed to pass the BBA. With the National Debt topping \$15 Trillion this week and our country continues to reel from the effects of irresponsible government spending, now more than ever, Congress needed to take bold action to permanently stanch the bleeding.”

Unfortunately, the BBA was dead on arrival in the House after President Obama announced his formal opposition to the legislation. Today's vote proves that Washington is not serious about solving our Nation's spending problem. Forty-nine out of fifty states have set an example for Washington by passing BBA's of their own. As Hoosier families continue to struggle to live within their means, the President and House Democrats clearly believe those same rules shouldn't apply to Big Government. Washington continues to borrow 40 cents of every dollar it spends, robbing Peter to pay Paul in a vain attempt to perpetuate the existence of the federal government's bloated bureaucracies. The system is broken and they simply refused to see the reason in this common sense measure. The President and his like minded cronies instead have chosen to reduce this debate to election year scare tactics by falsely claiming to seniors that the BBA will kill Social Security and Medicare all the while continuing to stoke the coals of their burgeoning class war, rather than work with their colleagues across the aisle to stave off out of control spending and get American's back to work. In defeating the balanced budget amendment they have made their priorities clear.

MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPION CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge Michigan's Division 1 State Champion Cross Country team from Milford High School. On November 5, 2011 the Milford Mavericks outran the Hartland Eagles to claim the title, placing three runners among the state's top five finalists.

After a season that saw great success in both dual meets and invitationals, Milford won the West Division of the Lakes Conference in the Kensington Lakes Activities Association with a record of 5-0. The Eagles placed 2nd in the talent laden Lakes Conference meet behind Hartland. Moving on to the undeniably toughest MHSAA Regional, the Eagles' 55 point total topped conference rivals Hartland and Lakeland with 83 and 94, respectively.

Head Coach Brian Salyer's harriers were determined to take the state title as the starter's pistol sounded at Michigan International Speedway. The Kensington Lake Activities Association Lakes Conference placed an incredible four teams in the top five state finalists. Milford avenged the stinging conference loss to Hartland by legging out a 1st place finish of 128 over 2nd place Hartland's 172. Waterford Mott took 3rd with 177 and Lakeland finished 5th with 188.

Mr. Speaker, the 2011 Milford Mustangs deserve to be recognized for their determination, achievement and spirit, and I am very proud of their fortitude and effort. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Mavericks for obtaining this spectacular title and in honoring their devotion to our community and country.

ON THE OCCASION OF DANIEL BENTON'S RETIREMENT FROM THE BERKLEY CITY COUNCIL AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Daniel Benton for his fifteen years of leadership in the Berkley, Michigan community as a City Councilman.

A resident of Berkley since 1979, Dan has been an active member of the community, working to improve the lives of its residents. With his wife, Carol, he raised their three sons, all of whom attended Berkley Public Schools. Outside of his own family, Dan's values are evident in his support of local Park and Recreation programs like Hoops Basketball and Dad's Club Baseball, which promote athletic programs that help local youth make healthy life choices. And, as a dentist, Dan also operates his own practice within Berkley, providing area residents with important healthcare services.

One area of particular focus for Dan's activism has been the Berkley Public Library, which he has supported in many different capacities over the years. He served the library